

OPINION:

LET US INTROSPECT: FAULTY EDUCATION SYSTEM THAT SWALLOWS YOUNGSTERS – NEEDS REFORMATION!

Independent Researcher and Columnist, University of Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir

Ishfaq Parwaz, Independent Columnist

***Note:** This article is an opinion based paper written in essay style. As it is not a research paper, it does not follow the guidelines and protocols specific to research papers.*

Most of us would have heard a story from 'Arabian Nights', vis-a-vis a giant to whom people used to offer their beloved daughters in order to please him and avoid his wrath. Nobody had garnered courage to fight him back. At last, it was a courageous man of that time, Hatim, who came to their rescue and killed the giant by way of his wit and intelligence and got them freed from the brutal claws of the giant. It is unfortunate that the same giant, though much more furious, angry, and stronger, has reborn after thousands of years in the shape of our education system. This time, its victims are not daughters alone, rather it is eating the beloved sons of our nation too. It can be argued that the negligent approach of the government and relevant experts is allowing this giant to enjoy a free ride.

The prevailing education system is similar to that giant from the Arabian Nights in many ways. It is our education system that gulps down our youngsters at an alarming rate. Everyday newspapers are in abundance with stories and reports of suicides committed by youths for their poor performances in examinations. Why have they been such frail? What are the reasons that compel them to take such an extreme step? Our youngsters who do not do well in studies are not incompetent or stupid; rather the subjects that they are forced to study are not those that they have their natural interests and talents in. They have got fed up with the existing state of educational system and see the only solution as ending their lives to get rid from this unworthy and unproductive educational system and parents unsighted desires for their children's career (which they decide with no consultation with the students themselves). Developed countries have not developed for no reason, but they completely reformed all important sectors and governance systems, including education. Their first step was to shun obsolete practices which they followed up with continuous optimization of systems and practices in consultation with experts and relevant stakeholders. Where are the local experts who hold reins of reformation in educational system and their supervisory functionaries? Let us retrospect. The authorities that have been assigned the job to reform and overhaul the educational system are relaxing in their cozy government allotted quarters and enjoying their deep slumber. Either the hues and cries of parents whose children commit suicides perhaps do not have enough strength to get them awoken from the snooze, or they too are inept for the post and are here due to our flawed educational system and inappropriate governance systems.

Parents spend their laborious earnings in the schooling of their wards and presume that they will develop into good humans and carry with them all essential moral values. Parents feel good when they listen to good comments about their wards from others and that is not less than a prestigious award to them. On the flipside, consider the pain and trauma of those parents whose children commit suicides due to this flawed system of education. Their dreams are being taken away from their laps. They can do nothing except to wail on their misfortunes. School is believed to be a place where the uncivilized are molded and turned into a cultured, disciplined and strong men and women who are capable of courageously handling any challenges in the life that they come across. Unfortunately, this is not happening at the moment.

No two persons can be alike. Allah has made every individual with some special inherent and inborn talent. If the inborn talent of an individual is identified and developed, each and every individual will become and prove to be a hero, not only to his immediate acquaintances but also to the broader society and the whole country, even broader than that too. The world will really become a heaven and Allah would be pleased with His creation.

It has been seen that children thrive more in the areas where they have their own interests. So, if the government is really concerned and sincere towards the nurturing, well-being, and success of youngsters, who are undeniably the future of our nation, it has to move towards an inclusive cessation of the prevailing educational system, which has so far withered thousands of blossoms in adolescence, and come up with a completely brand-new approach. Govt has to, on priority, constitute teams of qualified educational specialists and psychiatrists, having speciality in determining inborn aptitude of a child, and send them to schools to carry out indispensable tests including DMIA (Dermatoglyphics Multiple Intelligence Analysis) of each child in order to ascertain his/her inborn talent, learning style, intelligence, brain strength, behaviour, personality, potential and thinking patterns, and above all to identify how to develop better relations between the trio viz. child, parent and teacher. After finding this essential information, talent should then be complemented and nurtured further by giving proper education and development in accordance with the student is interested to study.

If governments will do this kindness, the day is not far away when every inmate of the family will be a hero in his field of choice and there will be no more suicide incidents over the anxiety from poor performance in the academics. This will be the real victory for the government and the people, and a permanent death to the merciless giant. However, if the government still turns a deaf ear towards this alarming issue, many youngsters will continue to lose their life at the hands of the giant, weakened by the apathy on part of the government.

Sometimes parents become the killers of their child too - not only physically, but also in terms of their moral values and aims and ambitions in life. They have to bury their passions and interests alive to fulfill the desires of their parents to see them as doctors and engineers. With such desires, the parents become the killers of their wards without even realizing the impact of their decisions and choices which they impose on their children.

In the near past, we have seen many doctors cracking the highest scores in UPSC Exams¹, country's highest competitive exam, and join various administrative roles. Had these doctors been taught administration from the early stages in their education, they would have been proved much more fruitful and could give solutions to the twisted issues in regards to policy-making. Those who had been dropped during their selection in MBBS and filtered out might still have proved good in the health area. However, their careers went to darkness due to inappropriate selection practices. I have heard Dr. Alakband, the renowned Gastroenterologist of the state, saying in an interview on DD Kashmir decades ago, that he was refused an admission into the science stream initially. It was after a lot of toil that he could finally manage to get an entry in his desired stream. His great contributions in the field of gastroenterology are not a mystery for anyone – they are humungous.

In a recent discussion with one of my teachers, I asked him about his family. He told me about his teenage sons who he wanted to choose an administrative career; the boy wanted to be a cricketer. He went by the choice his son made and supported him in pursuing his preferred career. According to him, had he forced on his son his own opinion, he could have neither become a good administrator nor could prove his mettle in cricket. This is one of the examples which shows us the how parents can nurture the talents and interests on their children. Enforcing our ideals on our children is definitely not the way to go if we are serious about the future of our children.

Through this article, I appeal all parents to try to find out areas of interests of their wards and provide them full support and whatever facilities they can reasonably muster so that their talent is developed and flourished properly and they become a source of pride for not only their families but the entire nation.

¹ Civil Service exams in India which are conducted by Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)